



Volunteers recognized

Bicentennial Committee
earns Volunteer
of the Year Award



Job actions impact students

Rotating strike hit
Niagara Tuesday

Rangers winning ways

get it
online
www.niagaraadvance.ca

Santa comes to town



PENNY COLES Niagara Advance

It was a dreary morning for the NOTL Christmas Parade Saturday, but one of the warmest in memory, and the rain stopped once the parade began. Spirits were not dampened, however, and the arrival of Santa brightened the day for all. For more photos please see Page 10.

Generous donations fill food shelves for Christmas

Newark Neighbours
well-stocked to
help those in need

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

Newark Neighbours volunteers are busy putting together about 35 food and gift baskets for families who would otherwise have a difficult time at Christmas.

In the weeks leading up to the holiday, the food shelves at the local food barn have gone from bare to overflowing, thanks to several local organizations and businesses, says Newark president Barbara Ahluwalia.

Although the number of needy in town has declined over the decades since founder Peggy Anderson first began helping out at Christmas, it has remained about the same in recent years.

There are more single moms and seniors on their list now, says Ahluwalia, rather than the families with large numbers of children who sought help in Newark's early years.

See Page 2

JOHN Wiens
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Newark overflowing with food, toys

From Page 1

There are still families with working parents who aren't making enough to make ends meet at the holidays, which can stress budgets for many people.

But there will be no problem putting together gift baskets, thanks to the generosity of several local businesses and organizations, including last month, Chocolate FX in St. David's, which held a Fashion Stroll in November, asking for bags of food or \$5 for Newark Neighbours instead of charging admission.

"They brought in 55 skids of food—it was amazing," says Ahluwalia.

"They also collected \$300 and spent it on more food for us."

Phil's Valu-mart also

made up bags of food for Newark, and collected money from customers to offset the cost.

Food was collected at the Candlelight Stroll and at the Christmas Parade, all very much appreciated by Newark volunteers, who will begin making up boxes containing an extra two week's worth of food for each family registered with the food bank, along with Christmas dinners and gift baskets.

The Bethany Mennonite Church dropped off two van-loads of food last week, while the Sunday School classes at Bethany, including children aged three to 12, made up beautiful little gift baskets as their contribution to the community at Christmas.

The baskets include

tooth brushes, snacks, notebooks and little toys.

Putting the baskets together offers an opportunity for children to begin learning at a young age that it's important to give back to the community, says Bethany Sunday School teacher Carrie Hendriks.

"The children learn that we can give of our time and ourselves to help others," she said.

"We tell our kids we can keep people in our thoughts over the holidays, that thinking of them is a way to offer our support."

And Newark has again received beautiful hand-made wooden toys from Egan Epp, who donates his lovingly crafted toys each year for local children.



In addition to new games and toys donated by churches, schools and service organizations, some NOTL children will also receive beautiful hand-crafted wooden toys made lovingly each year by Egan Epp, says Newark Neighbours president Barbara Ahluwalia.

See Page 3

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Gift cards still needed for teens

From Page 2

Willowbank School of Restoration Arts and NOTL Hydro were collecting food at Saturday's parade, while the girl guide organization in town collected warm mittens, hats and scarves to add to Christmas baskets.

The RBC has a Christmas bus in their Mary Street branch and is collecting gifts for 52 children, asking clients to bring in an unwrapped toy to match with one of their tags

on the tree.

The only difficulty Newark will have in meeting their Christmas needs is for older children. The teens are always the hardest to buy for, says Ahluwalia, so volunteers will use their cash donations to buy gift certificates for music, movies or the Pen Centre.

They also hope to receive more gifts that they can put in the baskets for adults—small items such as socks, or toiletries such as perfume, scented soaps or aftershave.

"We like to make sure there's something there for the moms and dads too," says Ahluwalia.

Gift baskets must be finished in time for pick-up Dec. 21. Although Newark will be closed to shopping, staff will be at their John Street location accepting donations until Dec. 21, although they would appreciate any Christmas items by Monday, Dec. 17. They will re-open for shopping Thursday, Dec. 27 and Friday, Dec. 28, and then close until Thursday, Jan. 3.



NOTL Hydro president Jim Huntingdon collects food for Newark Neighbours in Saturday's Christmas Parade, ensuring the community food bank can fill food boxes for the needy at Christmas.



Carrie Hendriks drops off gift baskets to Newark Neighbours made by Bethany Mennonite Church Sunday School children and new and gently used toys donated by parishioners on their White Gift Sunday.

The Gallery Players of Niagara

PRESENTS

Glissandi Christmas

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Guy Bannerman – Narrator
Deborah Braun – harp
Douglas Miller – flute
David Braun – violin

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Niagara-on-the-Lake

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Guy Bannerman
Deborah Braun
Douglas Miller
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Local students miss day of school

Christmas parade entries, school concerts also impacted

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

As difficult as it was for some teachers at neighbourhood public schools, they were outside picketing yesterday as part of rotating walkouts staged by their union.

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario began strikes around the province Monday, with Niagara targeted for Tuesday.

Sharon Alan, president of the Niagara ETFO, said

the rotating one-day stoppages will continue around the province, but not in Niagara after Tuesday.

Classes and buses were cancelled in public elementary schools to ensure the safety of students, which couldn't be guaranteed without teachers in the classrooms, the school board said in letters that went home to parents to warn them of the strike and give them time to make alternate arrangements for child care.

But Tuesday wasn't the only time local students were affected by their teachers' job action.

There weren't quite as many entries in Saturday's Niagara-on-the-Lake

Christmas Parade as expected, nor will there be the traditional evening Christmas concerts.

St. David's and Crossroads Public Schools pulled their floats as a result of job actions dictated by their union.

Parliament Oak, with an entry organized by parents, was able to participate.

The provincial union has released a detailed list including the most minuscule of tasks normally undertaken by teachers and explicitly spelled out what is permitted and what isn't, warning that there could be a monetary penalty fine if those dictates are ignored.



Parliament Oak students were able to participate in Saturday's NOTL Christmas Parade because their entry was organized by parents, not teachers.

See Page 5

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Evening concerts cancelled

From Page 4

Extracurricular and volunteer activities at elementary schools have been suspended—sports, clubs, field trips and administrative duties are on hold, with teachers risking sanctions if they ignore the union's dictates.

Catholic schools are not involved in the job actions or rotating strikes.

St. Davids and Crossroads, which would normally have a daytime and evening performance of their Christmas concerts, are reduced to just one performance during school hours, making it difficult for many parents to attend.

Parliament Oak is not having a Christmas concert this year, but not because of the job actions—the school only organizes a concert every other year, the principal said.

Teachers and principals contacted locally said they were not supposed to comment on the labour dispute, but made it clear that it's difficult in such a small, tight-knit community, to withdraw activities from their students.

"We have teachers in tears, and parents upset for kids and the teachers," said one school administrator.

"The teachers love their kids, and this is really hard for them. It's hard on everybody."

Although Christmas collections for the needy

are continuing as planned—the union is allowing teachers to help—St. Davids Public School has been unable to follow through on a time-honoured tradition that goes back decades.

Students have for years collected Canadian Tire money, then a select group of children, accompanied by a teacher, would go shopping to buy toys at a St. Catharines Canadian Tire store.

But this year, the kids are handing over the Canadian Tire money to Newark Neighbours volunteers, who, instead of loading up several vans full of toys chosen by the kids, will go shopping themselves.

Although Newark will still have some fabulous gifts to hand out to families in need, as one teacher pointed out, the children miss out on the important learning experience.

Job action "is tough at any time of year, but it's really an unfortunate situation at this time of year," said the teacher.

"It's political action, and we have to deal with it."

One of the parade organizers, also a parent, was disappointed to learn

about the cancellation of public school entries.

"We've always had the public schools in the parade," she said.

"We've never not had them in the parade."

The teachers are unhappy, and the kids are upset, but parents who suggested taking over "strongly discouraged" from getting involved, she said.

"It's really too bad that they couldn't be in the parade. They were an important part of the 'small town feel' of our parade. It feels like the kids are being held hostage by the teachers' union, over an issue that shouldn't be their problem. It's a sad state of affairs."

High schools remain open, although thousands of St. Catharines high school students are skipping classes and taking part in protests to draw attention to their opposition to teachers' cancellation of extra-curricular activities.

Those scheduled to have floats or marching bands in the NOTL Christmas Parade Saturday were able to participate, since high school teachers' job actions didn't begin until Monday.



Teachers picket in front of Crossroads Public School Tuesday, as Niagara was hit by rotating strikes organized by the union representing public elementary school teachers to protest Bill 115 and a request from the province to accept wage and benefit cuts matching Catholic school teachers.



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our editorial

In NOTL, volunteers make it happen

This week, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and the Niagara Advance recognized a group of the busiest people in our community—the volunteers who make it all happen.

What ever is fun, what ever raises money, what ever is good and important in our community, our volunteers will be behind it.

This year's Volunteer of the Year Award was given to a very dedicated group of people—the town's War of 1812 Bicentennial Committee. The work of this committee will end up spanning several years, but its legacy will last much longer. These committee volunteers have taken on the task of reminding us of our history

and commemorating the events that gave us local heroes and our identity as a nation, a task that is itself of heroic significance.

To each of our volunteers, we say congratulations, and thank you for all the great causes you support, the successful events we all enjoy that you make happen, the assistance you lend to those in need in the community—you all make our community the most amazing place to live. It wouldn't be the same without you.

And please, remember to nominate a deserving volunteer next year, so we can publicly thank another special and very deserving group of our friends and neighbours.

letters to the editor

Thanks to all for Famous and infamous

After a very successful season "Famous & Infamous", NOTL's own interactive Biography program has gone into hibernation until next March.

On behalf of all those who attended or who participated in any way we say a big thank you to this year's presenters all of whom did a great job telling about the Life and Times of a remarkably mixed bunch of historical figures.

Naturally, we also thank the NOTL Library staff for room set, publicity posters and steering patrons towards books touching on the lives of persons who will be the subject of forthcoming presentations.

Planning for F&I's 2013 season is well under way. All sessions will be at the Library on the third Wednesday of each month

from March to November.

Consideration is being given to finding F&I a two-session happening: an afternoon and an evening presentation. This will accommodate the many new residents of NOTL (particularly Virgil & St. David's) who have day time jobs.

With only one dissenter all former presenters have indicated they favour each F&I presentation having two sessions.

Liz & David Murray

Best Rotary concert yet

I have just returned home after attending the Rotary Choral Concert held in the Niagara United Mennonite Church - it was wonderful, and maybe it was due to the venue but the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus was the best I have ever heard - just remembering it gives me goose bumps.

Now I am not sure how the attendance numbers

went due to the change of venue, but the reason for that change really distressed me. If I have the facts wrong then I suggest I be corrected on these pages so that all the others can also understand.

As I understand it the Shaw Theater (powers that be) said it necessary to up the cost of holding the Choral Concert there, as it has been for the past 12 years. The numbers being bandied about range from \$8,000 to \$12,000. The proceeds for this event go to charity, everyone gives of their time and the town's people and friends love the event, especially those who participate in the singing. So who got their wires crossed?

Maybe what got me so upset was the fact that it was reported in the same edition of our paper that our Town Council had just gave a grant to Shaw of \$23,350. I don't know about you - but I object to my taxes being used that way.

Jean M. Cochrane

Our Old Town



When the Queens Royal Hotel was at its peak in the early 1900s, at the bottom of Regent Street, the beach had a wooden post break-wall and there was a beautiful sandy beach. This picture taken in the 1950's shows three wooden posts together, all that was left of the wooden break-wall, and the beach not looking looking quite so neat and tidy.

Photo from the collection of Jim Smith

Weather has been kind to us, so far

Are poinsettias poisonous?
Jean Cochrane promises they are not



Jean Cochrane
Happy Gardening

The weather has been kind to us in that we have had time to do a clean up and get the mulch on ready for winter.

However I chose a very cold day complete with freezing rain to decorate my planters. I wore my garden gloves and all in all I made a big mistake as my hands were painful - yet everything looked beautiful as the icy rain formed little icicles on the evergreens - if only it stayed off the roads.

Now the old question has reared its head - "Are Poinsettias poisonous?"

is always a 'smarty' who works out how to get through.

Our local nurseries have lots of ideas for gifts for your gardening friends and it feels so good to wander around all those flowers.



The popular Christmas poinsettia is colourful, beautiful, and good for the environment.

the answer is no, this is a misconception. But they are not intended for human or animal consumption.

However, they not only look beautiful but clean the air, so enjoy.

The bird feeders are being kept busy, especially the suet, though I make it an obstacle course, just to keep the squirrels busy and there

The hazards of a well-made bed, dust mites are ugly and menacing

80 per cent of asthmatic children test positive to dust mite allergies so it's important to minimize their impact on us

What do you sleep on? Of course, the normal reply is the mattress.

But few people realize they're also resting on millions of *Dermatophagoides pteronyssinus* (dust mites).

So how can you decrease the risk of these crawly creatures in your home? But dust mites are found in all homes no matter how clean. And, if you think you can escape this nasty creature by moving to Antarctica, don't bother, as it's been found in that location.

So are dust mites hazardous to our health? For a start, it doesn't help the psyche to know

250,000 of their fecal pellets in half a teaspoon. Hardly exciting bed mates.

Dust mites accumulate in rugs, fabrics, and furniture. But they prefer warm beds, pillows and blankets where they live along with vast amounts of their fecal droppings. Since their diet consists of our dead skin cells they're eager for us to go to bed. And how many people know that dead skin cells account for 80 per cent of house dust?

At this point you may be saying, "Luckily, this isn't a problem for our home." But dust mites are found in all homes no matter how clean. And, if you think you can escape this nasty creature by moving to Antarctica, don't bother, as it's been found in that location.

So are dust mites hazardous to our health?

For a start, it doesn't help the psyche to know



Dr. Gifford Jones
The Doctor Game

you're sleeping along with millions of these creatures every night.

But dust mites have been linked to allergy problems, watery itchy eyes, sneezing, nasal stuffiness, eczema and asthma.

It's the fecal pellet containing guanine that triggers allergic reactions.

A report by North America's environmental watchdog agency says asthma is one of the most common chronic conditions in our children and also a serious problem for

adults.

Authorities say that 80 per cent of asthmatic children test positive to dust mite.

So what can you do to limit the number of these spider-like mites, particularly if a family member suffers from asthma or other allergies?

Don't sleep with your pet. Pet dander is not your friend. Have Fido or Felix the cat sleep in an area far removed from your bedroom. If this causes psychological

I problems for you, I doubt that it will affect Fido or Felix.

Think twice before making up the bed. This can be a tough sell if you're a neatnik. A friend with a compulsive wife once complained to me, "If I get up at night to go to the bathroom, by the time I get back, my wife has made the bed."

But dust mites cannot live by dust alone. They

also need liquid, the water vapour we provide during the night by breathing and perspiring which amounts to one pint per person per night. This is why we always weigh less in the morning.

So at least toss covers well off the bed when you get up which helps to dry out the bed before it's made up.

In fact, even making up beds is dangerous, as chambermaids are known to suffer from "bed-maker's lung", an allergic condition.

I must admit this column is not inclined to promote a good night's sleep. In fact, since I started to write while writing it, I decided to do further research. I discovered that it's possible to purchase zippered protective mattress covers that are soft as silk and no mite can penetrate them.

Another company has developed a high tech

vacuum with dual action. It sucks up mites, but also uses ultraviolet light to penetrate mattresses, rugs and covered furniture to kill dust mites.

Maybe you're thinking "I'll have a service company get rid of mites." But Dr. Peyton Eggleston, professor of pediatrics at Johns Hopkins University, says there's no scientific evidence this works. The dust mites will return in a few weeks.

Remember the saying, "If you can't beat them, join them." This may be prudent in some situations. But I prefer the approach, "If you can't beat them, lock them up in a sure-fire protective covering." This will allow me to sleep better and stop itching.

For more information visit www.docgiff.com.

For comments email info@docgiff.com or check out Twitter @GiffordJonesMD.

Renovations at the pumphouse this month

The Pumphouse is being renovated, with upgrades that will focus on bringing the gallery, reception area, and Walker Room up to date.

Mike Smith
The Pumphouse

December is turning out to be a quieter month than normal, because there is a huge amount of effort going on for the redecorating the interior of Niagara Pumphouse.

Earlier in the year, Benjamin Moore awarded the Pumphouse a Restoration Grant for



@the Pumphouse
Mike Smith

\$1,500 to be spent on upgrading the Gallery, Reception Area, and the Walker Room, among the places needing a change.

In addition to this money, there was \$500 in paint donated as well.

The work is to include installation of new art display boards with new canvas, painting the gallery and reception areas, and

improving the overall look of the area with wainscoting and storage space.

Work began Dec. 3 and conclude by mid-December.

In the New Year, a new term will begin with courses and workshops, both old favourites and new ones, for everyone between the ages of seven years old to 107 years old and to keep the winter blahs from getting people down. There are brochures available now wherever brochures are known to inhabit or contact the Pumphouse or visit our website for details.

For regular courses, please register before Dec. 28...or before dinner tonight.

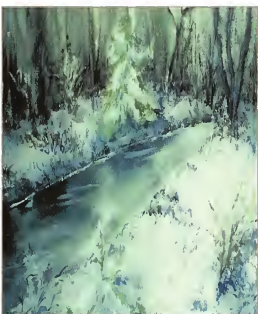
The Niagara Pumphouse would like to

wish all their students, teachers, and members Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

The Niagara Pumphouse has a Facebook page and is on Twitter. The Facebook page is Niagara Pumphouse Visual Art Centre and Twitter is Niagara PH. Link to our sites for the latest news about the Pumphouse.

The Pumphouse is located at 247 Ricardo Street in NOTL. Our phone number is 905-468-5455. Our e-mail is office@niagarapumphouse.ca or our website is www.niagarapumphouse.ca.

The Pumphouse is open from 12 to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday, 1 to 4 p.m. on weekends and admission is free.



Winter Glow is by local artist Helmi Moeh, whose work is on display this month at the NOTL Public Library. Winter classes at the Pumphouse will begin Jan. 7.

Working smoke detectors helped contain Line 7 garage fire, chief says

Firefighters were able to stop spread of fire to house

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

Smoke detectors did their job and made it possible for Niagara-on-the-Lake firefighters to stop the spread of a blaze that destroyed a Line 7 garage.

While the home suffered extensive smoke damage, the fire was contained to the garage, where it started, says Fire Chief Alex Burbridge.

The cause of the fire was unknown Tuesday, although it is not considered suspicious, said the fire chief.

He estimated the damage at between \$300,000 and \$250,000.

Smoke detectors woke the home owner about 5:30 Saturday morning at the home between Concession 2 and 3, and the homeowner called 911.

"The smoke detectors worked perfectly. Nobody got hurt and although the fire was fully involved when firefighters arrived, it was contained to the garage."

This incident was proof, the chief said, "that people are getting the message and doing what they're supposed to do. Smoke detectors save lives. This shows how important it is to have working smoke alarms—it's a good reminder that people need to check them."

One St. David's firefighter was taken to the Greater Niagara General Hospital for observation, after feeling dizzy from exhaustion, and released later that morning.

"He was working really hard to keep the fire out of the house," said Chief Burbridge.

Firefighters from Queenston, St. David's, Glendale and the Old Town, with its aerial ladder, were all called to help.

Although firefighters stopped the flames from spreading, the extensive smoke damage forced the couple from their home. They were staying at the Pillar and Post, said Chief Burbridge, although he wasn't sure how long they would be there.

"This is the worst time of year for fires," he said.

The fire department is promoting the "12 days of Holiday Safety," and working smoke alarms is one of

the 12 daily reminders.

Others include working carbon monoxide alarms, family members knowing how to get out of their homes in case of a fire, blowing out

candles before leaving the house, and drinking responsibly.

"That doesn't just mean not drinking and driving," says the fire chief.

Local man charged with sexual assault

Niagara Regional Police have charged a 22-year-old Niagara-on-the-Lake man in relation to allegations of sexual assault against two girls under the age of 16.

In early November, members of the Niagara Regional Police Child Abuse Unit began an investigation into allegations that the man had taken the two girls to hotels in the region and forced them into performing sexual acts.

Last Wednesday, police stopped Mazin AHMED, who was driving in the area of Stewart Road and Carlton Street, and arrested him without incident.

He was charged with sexual assault, sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, obstructing a police officer and failing to comply with an under-

taking and recognizance.

He was being held in custody pending a bail hearing in St. Catharines.

Police allege he is an associate of a St. Catharines man, who was arrested on 22 sex-related charges two weeks ago.

Information on crimes can be submitted anonymously using Crime Stoppers of Niagara.

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Mega mall moves forward as White Oaks traffic issues resolved

OMB agreement sees Taylor Road re-aligned and mall slightly smaller

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

The traffic issue that could have created a nightmare for guests leaving a local hotel has been settled, with a compromise that seems to work for both sides.

Ivanhoe Cambridge, developers of the Glendale mega-mall, has reached an agreement with White Oaks Conference Resort and Spa on the design of Taylor Road to reduce the impact on the hotel's clients, especially as they leave the hotel's parking lot.

Last June, Frank Rapiocco, development lawyer and White Oaks representative, attempted to convince Ivanhoe to have another look at their traffic plan before planning approval was granted by the town, and that falling, to have the town defer their approval. But he was unsuccessful on both counts—Ivanhoe representatives

were convinced they had a workable plan and any problems with White Oaks traffic flow were internal, and the Town gave its approval, expecting the traffic plan to be approved by the region.

Rapiocco says he had no choice at that point and appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board.

On Tuesday, the planned Outlet Collection project won approval from the OMB as Ivanhoe Cambridge signed off on settlements with White Oaks and the Town of Lincoln. Those details will see the proposed mall shrunk down to 650,000 feet from about 700,000.

Its massive size won't come all at once though, as discussed at Tuesday's OMB hearing. The developer's settlement with Lincoln means 550,000 feet will be built first, with the last 100,000 feet subject to a market study on how it would hit regional commerce.

Ivanhoe's traffic plan was, and still is, to widen Taylor Road to six lanes,

with a two-lane left turn lane for cars coming from Glendale into the mall's primary grand entrance across from the main exit from the White Oaks parking lot.

That would mean lengthy waits for drivers exiting White Oaks as they waited for a green light, and no room for cars to queue, impeding traffic flow through the parking lot, said Rapiocco.

The problem the intersection would create for White Oaks was unacceptable, he said, so the hotel's team of experts went to work on an alternative.

The deal they cut with White Oaks will see the re-alignment of Taylor Road 16.5 metres to the west, with the same six lanes and two left turn lanes, but allowing traffic exiting White Oaks to queue on what will become regional road allowance.

White Oaks' proposal had been for a road shift 23 metres west, but the current solution as proposed will work, said Rapiocco.

The cost of the realign-



ment will be paid by Ivanhoe, which had already budgeted for about \$7 million for road changes and improvements.

The 720,000-square-foot mega-mall project in Niagara-on-the-Green comes with the prospect of 1,000 construction jobs. It's expected to support 1,500 full- and part-time jobs once the \$150-million project is finished.

Lord Mayor Dave Eke has been solidly behind the mall development, doing what he could to move the project forward at the municipal level so that the OMB hearing would not

stall the anticipated May, 2014 opening.

"This is probably the biggest thing that has happened to the region since I don't know when, in at least the last decade or more," said Eke.

Both the regional buses and the town's fledgling bus service could see the mall become a transportation hub for transfers, for employees and for those wanting to visit other municipalities in the region, said Eke.

"For a number of reasons, this is a good news for Niagara-on-the-Lake and for the region. It's providing another destination we can all share. And these people (Ivanhoe Cambridge) are big players. They know their business, and they know this is a good site. It could be seen as an end to the potential bleeding of consumer spending across the border. And we're going to see some new retailers that don't currently do business in Canada."

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PENNY COLES Niagara Advance

Stephanie Vanderwielen watches the NOTL Christmas Parade with 21-month old Lucy Saturday, who gazes in wonder at the passing parade. Members of the NOTL Figure Skating Club (below) handed out candy canes to the crowd, while Lord Mayor Dave Eke and his wife Debbie waved to the crowd from a horse-drawn carriage. Niagara Nursery School parents and kids enjoyed the parade from a festive float, and collected hats and mittens to give to those in need.





Sam the Clown delights the crowds at Saturday's NOTL Christmas parade. The Shaw Festival had one of the most colourful entries in the parade, which included about 100 entries.



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Public Health stats show where we live a factor in life expectancy

Regional medical officer of health updates council on work of public health department on behalf of municipalities

Melissa Mangelsen
Niagara Advance

Our postal code is a factor in our life expectancy, said Dr. Valerie Jaeger, the medical officer of health for the Niagara Region.

Dr. Jaeger, a Niagara-on-the-Lake resident, came to council Monday to talk about the services provided

by the region's public health departments.

Some of the information she shared was from the Health Story of Niagara, available on the region's website, that lists health-related statistics by municipality.

It's based on income and educational level, but there's a 30 year difference in life expectancy based on

your area code," she said.

The public health department will take a look at the areas that are experiencing more severe problems with certain diseases and look for factors to show why they're so common. From there, they decide whether there's an issue for the Ministry of the Environment to investigate, she said.

Public health mandates include health protection and promotion, immunization of school pupils, smoke-free Ontario, day nurseries, safe drinking water and mandatory blood testing.

At the local level, public health is responsible for the health and well being of 430,000 residents, with a team which includes public health inspectors, health promoters, public health nurses, tobacco control officers and dietitians.

There are 17 ambulance bases and dispatch centres with offices located in Welland, Thorold, Niagara Falls and Fort Erie. There are sexual health centres in St. Catharines, Welland, Fort Erie and Niagara Falls.

"We're about adding years to life and adding life to years," said Dr. Jaeger.

Public health protects

residents in Niagara by testing water, monitoring beach water quality, inspecting food premises, providing safe food handling training, enforcing tobacco laws, preventing the spread of infectious diseases, and preventing transmitted infections and providing paramedic and ambulance dispatch services.

The public health department helps prevent disease and injury by ensuring adult, child and travel-related vaccinations, promoting road safety for drivers and pedestrians, providing dental care for eligible children, raising awareness around substance misuse, and encouraging regular cancer screenings, such as pap smears and mammograms.

Through public health, the region offers prenatal classes, provides parenting information, connects home visits for new parents, offers support to schools, provides confidential sexual health services, offers breastfeeding support, encourages regular physical activity and healthy eating, and provides counseling for adults experiencing serious and persistent mental illness.

The top 10 challenges highlighted for Niagara are the early years, because the first steps are important steps; comprehensive tobacco control; injury prevention; cancer, focusing on the preventable; chronic disease, addressing the modifiable risk factors; obesity; food and water safety; infectious disease control and outbreak management; emergency operations - keeping Niagara safe 24/7; and social determinates of health, giving a hand up to those who need it most.

Jaeger said the public health department is also working on an initiative to get old medications out of people's homes safely.

"When people keep old medications it opens up the risk for it to be accidentally taken by children," she said.

May 11 will be National Drug Drop of Day.



VIRGIL

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Council approves what they believe to be strong, solid budget

Councillor Gary Zelepa thanked the staff for their work behind the scenes to come up with good, strong budget

Melissa Mangelsen
Niagara Advance

Council approved the 2013 operating budget, Monday night at a regular meeting of council.

Meter reading and billing could be causing problems

Town Council approved hikes to water and wastewater rates Monday, but not before indicating there would like the Region to perform an efficiency audit of its water and wastewater facilities and services.

Council passed a motion asking Niagara-on-the-Lake town staff to look into how the town could make this request of the region, after approving a four per cent increase in wastewater rates and a five per cent hike in water rates for 2013.

The issue of wastewater rates came up at a committee-of-the-whole meeting last week where staff recommended a five per cent hike in wastewater, but councillors asked staff

to look into the issue further before giving final approval.

When the second report was brought to council on Monday staff had revisited its recommendation for the new wastewater rate, and reduced their recommendation to a four per cent hike, but advised that a smaller increase could result in higher increases in future years and potentially put capital projects at risk.

In the report received by council it was indicated that the public works staff is investigating an almost \$400,000 shortfall of revenue in the water distribution system and have come across some problems with meter reading and billing.

Councillor Gary Zelepa thanked the staff and Mike Galloway, the town's chief administrative officer, for coming up with a good solid budget.

"The staff put in a lot of work, and took our direction. We have a good solid budget and we appreciate the working behind the scenes that has gone into making this budget," said Zelepa.

The proposed 2013 operating budget was approved in principle by councillors last week and came back to council for approval Monday along with the 2013 proposed capital budget.

The 2013 operating budget reflects a 1.87 per

cent increase, or \$140,751 over the 2012 approved general levy. The general levy for 2012 was \$7,525,362 and this year town staff is recommending a tax-supported general levy of \$7,666,113.

But it's too soon to say how that increase will affect taxpayers, says Brenda Carreter, town treasurer—other factors, such as MPAC assessments, the regional tax levy and the education portion are still unknown.

One of the challenges identified was the shortfall of provincial funding of 108,000 funding from last year. Provincial funding for 2013 has been

confirmed at \$873,800 and that means another shortfall of \$204,800.

Other challenges included town salary increases and the first full year of budgeting for transit.

Lord Mayor David Eke said that public transit is something that will never generate income for the town. The public transit system has been budgeted for 2013 at \$59,600.

The solution to some of these challenges was the reduction of one position at the corporate services level.

A budgeted but unfilled cashier position is no longer required due to the new customer service

counter and the realignment of cashier duties.

There has also been a reduction of overtime budgets and a line-by-line review of all accounts.

Finance staff have analyzed the 2012 operating budget and estimate a \$250,000 surplus.

That is a conservative estimate and all final costs have been determined, the budget report said.

Early approval of the budget allows staff to move ahead with projects and allows departments to begin tender proceedings, with better pricing often found when large projects are tendered early in the year.



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10:00 am German Service
Message by Hans H. Dau
11:00 am Worship Service
Message by John Tieszen
"Be Patient as God Works"
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7:30 PM & 11:00 PM
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10:00am Coffee Time + 10:30am Worship Service
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Pastor Greg Alderton
www.village491church.ca

www.standardsouthchurch.org
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905-468-5731

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Worship Service 10:45 am
God's Word With Guide Us
Message by Pastor Jim Evans
Children's provided during service

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Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.

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Sunday, December 16th
9:30 am: 1st Service & CE
(childrens provided during service)
10:30 am: Coffee Time; 11:00 am: 2nd Service
(childrens provided mid-way through service)
Title: God With Us
Message by: Andrew Thieszen

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Barb McGale

Unique business holds weekly walk to raise money for animal welfare

Melissa Mangelsen
Niagara Advance

When Marisa Paean and Nathan Peterson decided they wanted a dog, they had no idea it would change the direction of their lives forever.

On Sept. 25, 2010 they welcomed Harley Dean into their home. He was a classic bulldog from his personality to his health issues. But working full-time in the city put a lot of pressure on the dog owners and they quickly realized that living in Toronto didn't fit their threesome anymore.

Paean and Peterson decided to return to their home in Niagara. They put Harley on a raw diet and haven't had a vet bill since.

It was at that time that they decided to open Niagara's first Pet Resort.

They opened up in June and are supporting local animal welfare organizations through a pack walk at the commons area in Old Town. Each person donates \$5 and dogs are walked together.

Paean said they got the idea for the pet resort because Niagara has a large dog community and people don't want to leave their dogs in kennels anymore.

"We have 10 acres here and the dogs are always socialized. It's a totally new concept to the area," she said.

"We think people are looking for an alternative. There's a sub-culture with people and their dogs. People aren't having kids anymore—they have dogs," she said.

"Their dogs are like their kids."

Currently they have a dog staying with them who has been there for five months.

The owners couldn't see their pets staying in a kennel that long, and preferred "the open concept," Paean said.

"There are a lot of great kennels out there though that are moving towards socializing more."

Paean said they have had an overwhelming welcome from the community and have been nominated for a Niagara Entrepreneur award for small business.

They take in about 20 to 25 dogs, and the dogs sleep in their home all together in a room.

"Everything is very pack oriented," she said.

They have two local employees working for them as well.

"We have people that are coming from Buffalo, Connecticut, and just all over to bring their dogs here

to stay," she said.

Dogs are screened before they're allowed to stay with them. They host a meet and

greet and observe every dog for social skills. They don't take in aggressive dogs.

They offer a unique program called Movie Night where owners can drop their dogs off Friday or Saturday

night from 5 to 11 p.m. The movie night frees up some time for the owner, but also allows the dogs to enjoy a movie.

"We have a 10 foot screen. A lot of dogs enjoy cartoons.

I know Harley loves them," she said.

Both Paean and Peterson are country kids and have many years of experience in working with dogs, cats, horses and raccoons.

They both have training in dog psychology and training, and are both Pet First Aid certified.

For more on the Niagara Pet Resort visit www.niagarapetresort.com.



Nathan Peterson takes a pack of dogs for a walk, raising money for animal welfare organizations.

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Hospital Auxiliary members agree to continue serving their community

Whatever form health care takes in NOTL if and when hospital closes, they will support it

Penny Colles
Niagara Advance

After more than 90 years of serving local health care, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Hospital Auxiliary is not giving up.

Last week, the auxiliary met to discuss its future.

Before the meeting, members were provided with some options to consider, with a view to arriving at some consensus at the meeting, says president Moyra McEachern.

Last June, Dr. Kevin Smith, the physician charged with studying health care in Niagara, made his recommendations to the province, which included closing the beds at the NOTL hospital. They are used mostly for long-term care, and if the building is viable and there is interest in converting it, the facility could continue to long-term care either by a private company or a public not-for-profit agency.

Doctors offices now at the hospital might be better off in a more central location, he said.

The NOTL hospital is just too small to be efficient, he said, with too few beds, and too few services.

His report recommended the just two hospitals serve the entire Niagara

Region: the St. Catharines facility which will open next spring, and a new southern-tier hospital. In addition to the Niagara-on-the-Lake site, he recommended the hospital in Welland, Niagara Falls, Port Colborne and Fort Erie close.

As auxiliary president, McEachern sits on a newly-formed community committee that is looking at the current health situation in NOTL and possibilities for the future, so that if and when the day comes that a date is set to close the hospital, "we'll be ready with a plan, with an idea of what we could do should we get word the beds would go."

As part of that discussion, she asked her auxiliary members what they would like to do. Possible options included disbanding the auxiliary, blending with the St. Catharines Auxiliary to volunteer at the new hospital, or continuing on in some form in the community.

"Going to St. Catharines was met with a resounding no," said McEachern.

"Our members very strongly want to stay in the community and support whatever facility ends up in town."

About half the 40 members attended the meeting, she said.

"After 90 years, they agreed we couldn't just walk away. Whatever we do, we will continue to support health care in the community."

Currently, the auxiliary provides "friendly visits" to patients, most of whom are

seniors requiring long-term care.

Volunteers tidy rooms, water flowers, help out by transporting patients to physiotherapy, and support the LifeLine program and the foot care clinic.

One member comes in to play the piano, and volunteers are providing the annual Christmas gift bags to patients to be delivered by Santa during next week's visit.

Although the auxiliary members decided to go ahead with their annual Christmas basket raffle, which is raising money for blood monitoring equipment, their fundraising has otherwise been put on hold, with the hospital facing such an uncertain future.

Throughout the discussion last week, many questions were asked, says McEachern, and not all the answers are known at this point.

"Members are worried about what will be here if the hospital closes that we could continue to support. We don't know that yet, but we decided that as long as there is health care in NOTL, we'll support it. We will not be moving to St. Catharines to

join its auxiliary. Our members don't want to drive that far, but it's more than that. We like the fact that we are a small auxiliary in a small community," she said.

"And if we have to fundraise to ensure we have a facility here in town, we'll do what we can in a small way. The hospital foundation members will be the ones who will have to go after the big money if we start a fundraising campaign."

McEachern sits on the

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Health Services Review Committee, formed in response to Smith's recommendations to the Ministry of Health.

Chaired by Maria Bau-Coote, executive director of the NOTL Family Health team, the committee is looking at the future delivery of community health-care services, as well as the fate of NOTL's current hospital site.

Also on the committee

are Lord Mayor Dave Eke, Councillor Terry Flynn, Councillors David Reimer, Karen Berti, Buki Jimoh and Andrew Smith, all members of the health team, and Brenda Jones, president of the NOTL Hospital Foundation.

Their goal is to look at ways to provide and support on-going and sustainable primary health care services, palliative care and transitional care for all NOTL residents.

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Gifts from the Heart deadline nears

➤ Push is on for Red Roof to reach \$60,000 goal to help special needs kids

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

Red Roof Retreat set itself an ambitious goal, but Steffanie Bjorgan has faith that the generous community of Niagara-on-the-Lake will help reach it.

The executive director admits to being just a little anxious about a \$60,000 target that would match the funds raised last year at this time with help from philanthropist Arthur Dalen, who offered a \$10,000 donation challenge for matching gifts. In just six weeks, \$60,000 was raised.



Santa visits Red Roof Retreat, and helps Sara, a client in the young adult day program, bake Christmas cookies. Santa is asking the community to be generous with donations for Red Roof this holiday season.

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Sunday, Dec 16, 2012
at Niagara United Mennonite Church at 7:00 p.m.

Partials by the Niagara Bethany Handbell choir begins at 6:45

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NIAGARA UNITED MENNONITE CHURCH
1775 Niagara Stone Road 905-468-3313

Encouraged by that overwhelming success, Red Roof's board set the goal for their annual Gifts from the Heart campaign at the same amount, to be raised by Dec. 31.

But this year, with just three weeks left to go, it has reached \$10,000.

"I know this community can do it, and it will be amazing, as it always is," says Bjorgan.

"We understand people leave things to the last minute."

Santa stopped by Red Roof last week to visit the members of the young adult day program, clients who are too old to attend high school but who do not qualify for any other community programs.

Red Roof supplements the cost of the program, but can only offer two days a week to each young adult it helps, says Bjorgan.

"Santa asks that you be generous for these kids," she says.

All proceeds raised by the campaign will go toward keeping programs affordable for special needs families, sustaining current programs and decreasing wait-list times. Funding will also help with developing new programs and identifying needs to reach more children and adults, and with supporting special needs families by continuing to provide safe, secure care at their 'home away from home.'



"Let there be light" at Red Roof Retreat, and the NOTL Kinsmen provided it. Last weekend Red Roof was visited by the Kinsmen, who completed a service project by putting in lighting along the accessible pathways of the Red Roof property, as well as enhancing lighting throughout the property, including installing floodlights on the barn. This was coordinated by Kinsman Ray Hobbs of Hobbs Electrical. Helping out with the project were NOTL Kinsmen Bob Forbes, Michael Slingland, Harold Dyke, Brian Litke, Ed Froese, Ray Hobbs (front), Randy Hipwell, Rod Konik and Ken Slingerland. Also on hand were (front) clients Mico and Matthew, Jordan, Lainie and Red Roof staff member Elizabeth Walters.

Three weeks left to reach goal

From Page 18

"We're so grateful to have such wonderful support from our community, who we consider to be a significant part of our growing family. Each year we are touched by their thoughtfulness and generosity," said Bjorgan.

"Every donation, small or large, helps Red Roof Retreat to continue to improve our programs and serve many more families."

For more information about the Gifts From The Heart Holiday Campaign or about programs provided by Red Roof Retreat, please contact Bjorgan, at 905-684-0235 or visit www.redroofretreat.com

Red Roof Retreat is a Niagara Region children's charity that provides year-round respite care, day programs and specialty camps for children and young adults with special needs.

Donations can be made through the Red Roof Retreat website at www.redroofretreat.com or by calling the office at 905-684-0235.



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During the Holiday Season more than ever, our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made our progress possible. We would like to express our sincere gratitude, to family, friends and the community for your continued support through 2012. Your gifts will allow Red Roof Retreat to continue providing programs such as Weekend Respite, Summer Camp, Teen Night, Saturday Day Camp and Horseback Riding and our Day Program for individuals ages 21-40. Red Roof Retreat is very fortunate to be in a community where so many are willing to give their support in so many ways. Again a heartfelt thank you for assisting us in making a difference in the lives of children, young adults and the families we serve.

Steffanie Bjorgan, Executive Director
Linda Wiebe, Executive Assistant
Board Members
And the Families we serve

Visit us at
www.redroofretreat.com
to see our newsletter

Saluting Niagara-on-the-Lake Volunteers 2012



17th Annual

Volunteer Recognition Awards



The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

Our community is very fortunate to have countless volunteers who give so generously of their time to community relations and activities. Congratulations to all the recipients of the Volunteer Recognition Awards. Your endless charitable acts of goodwill reiterate the fact that we live in a town of caring people who give unselfishly to the well-being of the community.

Best wishes, Lord Mayor Dave Eke and Members of Council

Saluting Niagara-on-the-Lake Volunteers 2012

Cultural Contribution & Volunteer of the Year...

This year's Volunteer Recognition Award in the category of cultural contribution goes to a group of people, the Niagara-on-the-Lake War of 1812 Bicentennial Committee, for ensuring that events that shaped our cultural heritage do not go unrecognized. There are several facets to the work of the committee, including the planning and publicizing of events that commemorate the history of our area—events that prevented our early communities from being taken over by our neighbours to the south. A core group of about 40 volunteers, led by a board of directors, has been working diligently, and with great enthusiasm on bicentennial celebrations for more than four years now. They have put their creative, organizational and fundraising skills together, putting in thousands of hours to present several iconic events and many other celebrations, re-enactments and cultural activities that recognize the town's pivotal role in the War of 1812. Their goal is not only to draw attention to the significance

of the history of our area but to provide a lasting legacy that will help preserve and protect our cultural heritage as we move forward. For their dedication to commemorating these significant events in our past, the 1812 bicentennial committee members are this year's recipients of the award for cultural contribution to our community and our Volunteer of the Year Award.



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Saluting Niagara-on-the-Lake Volunteers 2012

Sports & Recreation...



In the category of sports and recreation, we have a local couple who have achieved amazing success in a short time in building up a basketball league, Jennifer and Bruce Caughill. Jennifer and Bruce are the catalyst behind the Niagara Rangers Basketball Association. They both

played high school and university basketball at a high level and are using their experience and skills in helping our youth develop a love of the sport. The Caughills started the Rangers Basketball Association in 2010. Along with their own financial contribution and some start-up donations from local businesses, they started a novice girls house league team and an atom girls travel team. The house league included about 30 girls and the 12-member travel team had a great first season, including a trip to the provincial championships where they finished fourth. In their second season the Caughills expanded the league further with a girls novice travel team and a development program for boys that included a house league and travel team. What they have achieved in just three short years is amazing, but they are not finished. Their goal is to have a fully established basketball program in Niagara-on-the-Lake for all ages, teaching young athletes, valuable life skills such as teamwork, commitment and dedication. For their leadership, hard work and dedication to establishing basketball as another option for our youth, Jennifer and Bruce are this year's recipients of the Volunteer Recognition Award in sports and recreation.

Historical Contribution...



This year's Volunteer Recognition Award in the category of historical contribution goes to Tony Chaborn for his work as chair of the fundraising committee that is helping to make War of 1812 commemorative events possible. Fundraising is an essential component of every volunteer organization, and although there was some expectation of

funding from upper levels of government for the staging of War of 1812 bicentennial events, Tony wasn't prepared to sit back and wait for the money to pour in. Not everyone is suited to the task of asking others for money—most of us would either do just about anything else—but Tony took on this job and tackled it as if commemorative events depended on the success of his efforts. And as it turned out, he was not wrong—government money has not poured in. But with one iconic event, the Battle of Queenston Heights, successfully commemorated, the occupation of Niagara and the burning of the town are events that will highlight our history in 2013. Thanks to Tony, planning for those events continues, with the knowledge that with or without grants, the important history of our area will be celebrated with the distinction it deserves. Raising money takes perseverance, and we know that is one of the reasons why Tony has been so successful—he doesn't give up. But the other reason is his passion. When he talks about the importance of bicentennial commemorations, his enthusiasm, his energy, and his dedication to ensuring the success of future events, are contagious, making people want to get on board and do their part to contribute. For his determination to see that bicentennial events properly planned and impressively presented, we are happy to give him this award recognizing his contribution to celebrating the history of our town in style.

Community Assistance...



The award for community assistance goes to photographer Rachel Spivak, for her work with an organization called Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep. Rachel is a professional photographer with a studio in Virgil where she specializes in family photos. But she also puts her skills to work with a volunteer,

not for profit organization that provides a very valuable service provided for families who are experiencing the tragic loss of a baby. Rachel has been the area co-ordinator for about seven years, but does most of the photography herself, determined to offer a caring and sensitive service for families who are going through the worst time in their lives. When a call comes from a hospital in the region, or often from Hamilton, she makes child care arrangements for her own two youngsters, grabs her bag and heads out, often with little idea of what awaits her as she walks into the lives of parents who are facing the death of their child. The results of her efforts, at no charge to the family and often after hours of working on her photos at the computer to make them the best they can be, are incredible, breathtaking, sensitive portraits of lives ended too soon. These portraits of the babies Rachel calls her "sleeping angels" help families through their grieving process, giving them keepsakes and memories that will last a lifetime. The question she is most often asked about her work is "how can you do it," and her answer is, always, "how can I not." For the comfort Rachel gives to families during this most painful time, Rachel is this year's recipient of the award for community assistance.


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Saluting Niagara-on-the-Lake Volunteers 2012

Education...



For his efforts to educate our community on important health issues, this year's Volunteer Recognition Award in the category of education goes to Dr. Bill Brown. Fortunately for Niagara-on-the-Lake, when Dr. Brown moved to town to retire, he found he wasn't well-suited to

retirement, and one of the projects he undertook to promote health for local residents was a series of monthly InfoHealth sessions. Working with the town's Family Health Team, Niagara-on-the-Lake library staff, Cooze and McMaster's Regional Medical School, as well as community volunteers, he has successfully managed to bring medical experts to the library to talk about health problems, making residents aware of, for example, the symptoms of stroke and heart attack and the importance of seeking treatment quickly. He has brought cancer specialists to town to talk about symptoms and recent advances in treatment, and has called on local physicians, pharmacists and paramedics to talk about a wide variety of health care issues. Through Dr. Brown's efforts we continue to be updated on medical advances and made aware of important information that will help us to make informed decisions about our health. We are indeed blessed to have a doctor in our community who believes strongly that ongoing education in health care is important, and who has taken the initiative to organize these InfoHealth sessions. For this we say thank you to Dr. Brown for trying to keep us healthy, and present him with a Volunteer Recognition Award in the field of education.

Safety...



For their contribution to safety, this year we would like to give a Volunteer Recognition Award to St. Michael School for their outstanding record for fire drills. Fire safety education has to begin with our children, and our fire department recognizes this by teaching elementary school students fire safety at home and at school. This year, St. Michael Catholic School students and staff received top marks for showing a combination of skill, timing and organization in fire drill and safety procedures. During their fire drills, records are kept to show how well the drills are completed, and whether proper fire safety protocol is followed. St. Michael students also won the Lord Mayor's Cup, a trophy handed out to the school with the best fire drill record to encourage fire safety, and the trophy was recently presented to proud St. Michael students. Learning to be safe at home and safe at school through their fire safety education has earned St. Michael Catholic School students this year's Volunteer Award for Safety.

Working with Youth...

In the category of Working with Youth, Shirley Olley has been chosen to receive a Volunteer Recognition Award for more than 50 years of working with the local girl guides. At a time when many youth organizations are struggling to maintain their membership, the local Girl Guide Association, which includes Brownies



and Sparks, remains strong. That is thanks to Shirley Olley, who each September takes on the responsibility of ensuring the local groups have good leaders—there have been years when, without her help, there wouldn't have been enough volunteer leaders to offer all three groups to Niagara-on-the-Lake girls. And there have been years when, without her involvement, there might not have been enough girls. She makes sure that the girl guide movement in Niagara-on-the-Lake remains strong and healthy. But there is more to her assistance with guiding, which has spanned more than 50 years. Shirley loved being a girl guide, and became a leader when she was 19. When she married and had a family, she continued as a leader while her three daughters were through guiding. She eventually became a national trainer, and has worked with other leaders across Canada, even travelling around the world to train leaders on Canadian forces bases so that girls overseas with the parents in the military can have the same opportunities as girls here at home. She also continues to stay involved locally, helping out Guides, Brownies and Sparks if a leader can't make it to a meeting and stepping in to offer assistance on special occasions. For Shirley's decades of dedication to Guiding, she is this year's recipient of a Volunteer Recognition Award in the category of Working with Youth.

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Saluting Niagara-on-the-Lake Volunteers 2012

Community Events...



Each year there are many wonderful, successful events organized by dedicated volunteers. This year's award for community events goes to Nancy Voigt, for two outstanding events that have benefited local children and the community. In addition to working at many school fundraisers, first at the former Virgil School and

now at Crossroads, Nancy took on the job as co-ordinator of the first Niagara-on-the-Lake Home Show. Now in its fourth year in its current form, this show has raised more than \$60,000 for Crossroads, allowing Crossroads students to have extensive playground equipment in its first year of opening—something many schools wait years for. Nancy has worked hard on this project and its huge success is largely thanks to her. Not stopping there and drawing on the Crossroads success, Nancy took the lead in organizing the first annual home show for the Virgil Business Association. At last year's Stampede, with the help of a dedicated committee, Nancy was instrumental in bringing together a huge and very professional show, filling both arenas and generating a significant amount of money to go toward the Virgil Splash Deck, which will open this spring and will benefit local children for generations to come. Despite the many hours of hard work, Nancy continues to plan for both shows for the coming year. She is an amazing community resource and works tirelessly to raise money for the children of Niagara-on-the-Lake. We would like to thank her on behalf of local families and present her with the Volunteer Recognition Award for Community Events.

Working With Seniors...



In the category of working with seniors, this year's Volunteer Recognition Award goes to Vera Derbyshire for her decades of volunteering with the Niagara-on-the-Lake Hospital Auxiliary. There was a time when Vera wanted to

be a doctor. But although the times and her family situation made that dream impossible, she has spent more than 60 years working at the local hospital, as a volunteer for the auxiliary. The auxiliary is a non-profit organization that provides a variety of health care services in the community, including direct patient services, fundraising for the Niagara-on-the-Lake Hospital and supporting the community foot care clinic. The role of the auxiliary has changed substantially from the earliest days of the hospital, when the auxiliary members sewed curtains for hospital rooms, knitted blankets and socks and prepared meals for patients, but it continues as a grass roots organization, with a goal of helping patients and making them more comfortable in any way possible. In more recent years that has included purchasing equipment such as night tables and over-the-bed tables, in addition to still taking a cart around offering magazines and a friendly smile. For Vera's dedication to the hospital through her work with the auxiliary for more than six decades, she deserves thanks from all of us with this Volunteer Recognition Award.

Service Clubs...



We have many strong service clubs in our community, and many dedicated members. This year the award for contribution to a service club goes to Burt Ward, for his work with the Niagara-on-the-Lake Kinsmen. Burt has been a member of the Kinsmen for more than

25 years, and the members themselves wanted him recognized for embodying the Kinsmen motto: Serving the community's greatest needs. He has served in all executive positions in the club, helping guide its many fundraising efforts for all major projects during his years as a member. His imaginative thinking has also helped create new fundraising events, and he assists in organizing the popular annual car show. Burt is probably best known for his love of animals, and the many times he invited local schools to bring their students to his farm to see the farm animals. When a church group or school needed a lamb for their Christmas float, Burt was always willing to help out, and over the years many Kinsmen floats have won awards in the town's annual Christmas Parade, with Burt and his long beard representing one of the three wise men and a nativity scene made more realistic by the presence of his animals. His hospitality at the farm is legendary, but his fellow Kinsmen say there is more to Burt and his assistance where needed than we'll ever know, calling him this year's recipient for the Volunteer Recognition Award for contribution to a service club.

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Megan McEwen, Pat Rutherford, Sandy Frost, Colleen Cartier and Ida Lowas are some of the Xi Eta Chi Sorority members of Beta Sigma Phi who have prepared Christmas Crackers for Meals on Wheels to deliver Christmas day. Members have also donated several children's Christmas gifts to Newark Neighbours where they will be placed on Santa's sleigh and delivered to those in need.



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St. David's Hydroponics adding multi-million dollar extension

Three greenhouses operations grow high-end bell peppers and eggplant

Melissa Mangelsen
Niagara Advance

St. David's Hydroponics is adding a multi-million dollar extension to its state-of-the-art facility on Concession 7.

Sales manager Henry Stienstra said there will be another 24 acres dedicated to growing peppers and eggplants under glass, in addition to their 58-acre operation.

The new complex is slated to open by 2014, when it will become one of the largest high-end greenhouses in the region.

St. David's Hydroponics specializes in growing the finest European bell peppers and eggplants, drawing on knowledge and expertise gained from agriculture traditions in Holland.

Stienstra said their annual yield goes up and

down based on weather, but on average they produce 1.2 million, 11-pound boxes of peppers a year.

With harvesting from March to November every year, Stienstra said typically the weather here is ideal for growing peppers, but when there is a lot of heat and humidity like last summer, crops are damaged.

"The ideal climate is when it cools off to about 20 degrees at night. When it doesn't, we run into challenges."

The business strives to produce the best peppers and is looking to tap into new markets.

Vice-president Toine van der Knapp says he is excited to move the business forward and take advantage of an ever-increasing North American market.

The company supplies both the Canadian and American markets, with a client list that includes large retail partners on both sides of the border, as well as local merchants and restaurants.

"Our produce is the result of a meticulous growing process from

state-of-the-art computerized control systems to the extreme care used in grading and packing," said van der Knapp.

"We are not motivated to be the biggest, only the best in what we do. The company adheres to strict food safety regulations and is constantly searching for ways to maintain and improve upon its Gold Standard, which is awarded annually from the Guelph Food Technology Centre."

Stienstra likes to think that the success of the company stems from the high quality of their product.

"We put a lot of energy into grading and packaging. All our product is touched by human hands," said Stienstra.

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MELISSA MANGELSEN
Niagara Advance

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Queenston Choir concert Sunday

The show has become a tradition for the ladies, who always have a great time entertaining.

Melissa Mangelsen
Niagara Advance

In what has become a tradition for the Queenston Ladies Choir, they will be hosting their annual Christmas Concert Sunday at 3 and 7 p.m., at St. Saviours Brock Anglican Church in Queenston.

The choir, which is made up of 30 ladies from St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake, will be performing both sacred and secular selections for a little over an hour.

This is the ninth year the Queenston Ladies Choir will be hosting their Christmas concert, which has been held in various locations.

"We love doing this concert," says choir director Lisa Brillion.

"We love the social aspect of it, getting together and singing together."

The choir meets every Tuesday and began

rehearsing for their Christmas concert in September.

"We're going to be performing both new selections as well as ones we've performed before."

Typically any proceeds made at the concert go to charity, but this year Brillion said the funds will be used to help support an event in the spring that they are going to host in celebration of their 10th year anniversary.

The spring concert will feature both secular work and Broadway tunes and will follow the format of a dinner theatre.

Limited tickets are



available for the concert due to the smaller venue.

Tickets are available for \$20 for adults and \$15 for students. Brillion recommends

picking tickets up in advance by calling 905-262-4145.

This year the Queenston Ladies Choir released their third CD entitled

Remembering the War of 1812, with 15 selections on the CD. It was the third release for the ladies, with the previous two releases both Christmas albums.

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Holiday spirit in the Village



Village resident Doug Widdicombe said he had trouble keeping his hands from shaking as he snapped this photo of the Village Community Association decorating committee members Nancy Widdicombe, Mary Taylor, Sue Dale, Dana Branscombe and Lorella Farnell the night Dietsch Park and another little greenspace in the village were decorated. Also on the committee are Jane Chapell, Jennifer Siverns and Kathy Taylor. The association was started about 15 years ago and has fostered a strong sense of community since, and will continue to grow as residents take over management of internal lanes from the builders. The group of about 30 people enjoyed festive mulled wine and fresh homemade shortbread cookies while they decorated about 25 trees and one large one in the middle of the park. Neighbours also meet for regular barbecues in the summer and to watch the sunset. They also look after plantings in the park in the summer—the town cuts the grass.



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Tough job of casting finalized for Shaw's 13th season

▶ Casting 10 plays and making everyone happy is complicated, says artistic director Jackie Maxwell

ers ... and try to make everyone happy.

"It's very complicated, put it that way," says Maxwell, who directs next year's productions of Major Barbara and Enchanted April.

"There's a fair amount of horse trading ... It's a lot of hours of meetings, to be honest. Somebody said to me, 'Is there a computer program for something like that?' Not really, it's people."

When it clicks, you get slam dunks like Thom Allison in Ragtime or Nicole Underhay in The Millionaire, two of last season's most buzzed-about performances. Often, the key to a show's success is determined when casts are finalized.

It's not a task Maxwell takes lightly, not with Guys and Dolls, another big musical, on deck at the Festival Theatre.

Maxwell will often have someone in mind for a

show, and hope they're available. She also asks each director for a "wish list," then tries to get them signed.

Occasionally, a plum role like last season's Hedda Gabler is sought by many of the company's top actresses (the role eventually went to Moya O'Connell). But if egos are bruised, there are plenty of other great roles up for grabs each season, says Maxwell.

"Once it's done and once (the show) is out, the other actors have something else to chew on. Lots of young guys wanted to play Fabrizio in The Light in the Piazza, and there's only going to be one person playing it. But for the most part actors move on."

Casting for Shaw's 52nd season has been finalized.

Returning to the company after a year away to be Laurie Paton, to play

Lady Britomart in Major Barbara, and Patrick Galligan as the British Foreign Secretary in Peace in our Time: A Comedy.

Galligan fled the Shaw nest last year for a role in Mirvish Productions' War Horse.

"The iron door never closes," says Maxwell.

"In the end you have to be kind of zen about it. It's not like we're hockey teams and I'm sitting here with a big cigar signing people up."

Shaw favours Benedict Campbell, Jim Mezon, Nicole Underhay and Corrine Koslo all return next season, as does Thom Allison who earned nightly standing ovations in Ragtime.

"Thom's playing Nicely-Nicely, so he'll really get people going with those big numbers," says Maxwell.

On the other hand, Alan Hibbert, who played Sara so beautifully in Ragtime, is also in the



Shaw Festival artistic director Jackie Maxwell

musical but her bigger part is in Major Barbara. It's fun to play with that a little bit, sort of move

people around and give them different opportunities to shine. I like to mix it up for people."

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Silversmith Brewing Company to hold Christmas party for the public

Melissa Mangelsen
Niagara Advance

Silversmith Brewing Company isn't open yet, but will be holding their Christmas party this Friday, which is open to

the public.

Owners of the new microbrewery in Virgil—located in the old church that was formerly an antique store—hope to open in January, but in the meantime want people to see what they have accomplished so far.

The Tide & Vine Oyster Stout that will be served Friday is a combination of brew and seafood. It's a Gaelic stout meant to be matched with oysters.

They will also be serving four other brews of their own and three from other breweries.

Tickets for the event are \$10, and include a beer, food and live music. The event will run from 4 to 10 p.m. Anyone interested in attending is asked to call 905-468-8447, or visit them on Facebook or Twitter.

Owner Matt Swan with business partner Chris

Pontsoen and brewmaster Don McKinnon decided to open a brewery and were inspired by the need for local beer in the community, Swan said.

They moved into the old church located at 1516 Niagara Stone Road in March and started their

renovations.

The location provides them with character and distinction in a unique building that was built in 1894.

It has exposed brick inside and visitors will be able to see the brewing facility.



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Also, if you've never taken a horse and carriage ride

along the beautifully decorated Queen Street, don't miss the opportunity to take a free carriage ride offered between the Court House and Hendrik's Valu-Mart from now until Dec. 31, courtesy of the Landmark Shops of the Heritage District.

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PENNY COLES
Niagara Advance
Angela Redekop shows off the Christmas tree decorated for Greaves Jam, while Beauchapeau Hat Shop owner Kevin Neufeld tips his hat to the creative Christmas tree decorated to represent his store. The trees are on display in the Market Room at the Court House on Queen Street, and voting for their favourite before Dec. 31 earns you a chance to win a \$1,000 shopping spree.



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Birthdays

Birthdays

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Happy Birthday BIG BOY! Love your family

Obituaries

Obituaries

DICKIESON, Ivan Walter - Passed away at the Greater Niagara General Hospital on Thursday, November 29, 2012, in his 77th year. Walt, best friend, partner and soul mate of Jackie. Father of David (Susan), Kevin (Glenda), Beth-Anne (Dennis) and Chris. Remembered by his grandchildren. He is survived by his brother Darrell Dickieson and his wife Susan and brothers in law, Grant and Lewis Knox and lovingly remembered by nieces and nephews and long time friend Gordia Platt. Walt was a member of Masonic Lodge Niagara #2 and past member of the Royal Arch Masons #55. Walt and Jackie own and operate Creative Caulking and owned and operated The Car Care Centre in St. Catharines. The family would like to extend their appreciation to the staff at Chateau Gardens and for the exemplary care at Greater Niagara General Hospital. Cremation has taken place. A Celebration of Walt's life and interment in Prince Edward Island will be announced at a later date. Arrangements entrusted to **PASSFIELD MORTUARY SERVICES** 905-682-0474

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Greatly Missed!



ENNS, Jacob - Passed away peacefully on Friday, November 30, 2012 at the St. Catharines General Hospital. Jake celebrated his 80th birthday on September 2, with the love of his life, Annemarie (Bartel) to whom he was married for 58 years, and his children, Vic & Joyce, Rudy & Dorothea, Rita & George (Pauls) and Karen, and his grandchildren, Megan, Robin & Ron (Vasser), Mark, Emily, Jeremy, and Julianne Enns and Kyle and Kristen Pauls. We will miss him dearly. At the age of 16 Jake came to Canada with his mother and younger brother Corney, and settled in Niagara-on-the-Lake. He never missed an opportunity to express his thankfulness to be able to live in Canada. After working for Direct Winters Transport for many years, he established Enns Battery & Tire Limited on Creek Rd. in 1971. Many customers will remember trips into his cherry orchard while waiting for their new tires to be installed. Jake treasured his family and was active in his church community where he especially enjoyed singing in the choir. He led an active social life and enjoyed both playing sports and enthusiastically cheering on his children and grandchildren at their sports games. His favorite summer pastime was boating, teaching many friends to water ski during summer afternoons at the lake. Jake was very generous and always found ways to help those in need. He encouraged others to do the same and prayed daily for all volunteers. Jake was laid to rest at the Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery after a beautiful funeral service at Niagara United Mennonite Church on Monday, December 3



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Harlond leads NOTL novice Wolves to wins against Pelham, Wainfleet

The Niagara-on-the-Lake novice Wolves have picked up wins against Pelham and Wainfleet.

The Wolves took on Pelham Sunday, and proved that they were there to play. The game was fast paced and

end to end, with Evan Harlond being named an outstanding player for his impressive four-goal effort, exploding through

the defence system to score. Gannon Duffy and Maddison Giampa each found the back of the net for the Wolves, who defeated Pelham

6-3. The Wolves' goaltender Theo Vandereleay was solid, stopping a lot of difficult shots.

The game in Wainfleet was much closer, the Wolves

coming away with a 4-3 victory.

Duffy had a big night, netting a hat trick, while Harlond picked up a single, the game winner for the Wolves.



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NOTL's peewee travel team's player Caleb McCarthy body checks a Simcoe Warriors player at the Silver Sticks Tournament this weekend. It was an outstanding game with a 2-1 tough loss for the Niagara Wolves. Haiden O'Toole scored a beautiful goal for the Wolves.

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St. David's Hydroponics adding multi-million dollar extension

Three greenhouses operations grow high-end bell peppers and eggplant

Melissa Mangelsen
Niagara Advance

St. David's Hydroponics is adding a multi-million dollar extension to its state-of-the-art facility on Concession 7.

Sales manager Henry Stienstra said there will be another 24 acres dedicated to growing peppers and eggplants under glass, in addition to their 58-acre operation.

The new complex is slated to open by 2014, when it will become one of the largest high-end greenhouses in the region.

St. David's Hydroponics specializes in growing the finest European bell peppers and eggplants, drawing on knowledge and expertise gained from agriculture traditions in Holland.

Stienstra said their annual yield goes up and

down based on weather, but on average they produce 1.2 million, 11-pound boxes of peppers a year.

With harvesting from March to November every year, Stienstra said typically the weather here is ideal for growing peppers, but when there is a lot of heat and humidity like last summer, crops are damaged.

"The ideal climate is when it cools off to about 20 degrees at night. When it doesn't, we run into challenges."

The business strives to produce the best peppers and is looking to tap into new markets.

Vice-president Toine van der Knapp says he is excited to move the business forward and take advantage of an ever-increasing North American market.

The company supplies both the Canadian and American markets, with a client list that includes large retail partners on both sides of the border, as well as local merchants and restaurants.

"Our produce is the result of a meticulous growing process from

state-of-the-art computerized control systems to the extreme care used in grading and packing," said van der Knapp.

"We are not motivated to be the biggest, only the best in what we do. The company adheres to strict food safety regulations and is constantly searching for ways to maintain and improve upon its Gold Standard, which is awarded annually from the Guelph Food Technology Centre."

Stienstra likes to think that the success of the company stems from the high quality of their product.

"We put a lot of energy into grading and packaging. All our product is touched by human hands," said Stienstra.

Since van der Knapp arrived here in 1996 he has been striving to perfect the Dutch hydroponic techniques amid the unique climate of the Niagara Region. To do this, he uses biological insect control along with good stewardship when it comes to responsible water control and recycling practices.



MELISSA MANGELSEN
Niagara Advance

Work is well underway at St. David's Hydroponics, which is adding another 24 acres under glass to its state-of-the-art Concession 7 facility.



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Rangers earn win over Brantford on home court

Rangers control game to come up with a 43-23 victory over Brantford.

Jennifer Caughill
Niagara Rangers Coach

The Niagara Rangers atom girls basketball team defeated Brantford CYO 47-13 Wednesday, on the Rangers' home court at Crossroads Public School.

The Niagara girls came out strong, pressing from the start and up 8-0 at the end of the first quarter.

They kept control for the remainder of the game and worked hard at passing the ball up the floor to secure their victory.

Julia Colavecchia and Madison Crosbie dumped in eight points each and were strong on the boards along with the help of

Ashley Harris who knocked in seven points and picked up a number of rebounds for the Rangers.

Olivia Klassen was tough on the boards throughout the night and hit four points along with Emma Parkin and Indy de Groot.

Strong defensive play by Logan Brown and Olivia Krieger helped in the win.

Jillian Landry, Maddie Caughill, Stella Wiens and Kaitlyn Wiens all played solid games.

The Rangers will be participating in the St. Catharines Rebels Tournament this upcoming weekend, Dec. 15 and 16 and facing teams from Guelph, Kitchener and Pelham.

The Niagara Rangers novice boys will also be participating in the tournament.



Olivia Krieger (11), point guard for the Niagara Rangers Atom Girls, pushes the ball up the court against Brantford CYO.

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NATIONAL POST



1755 YORK ROAD

\$2,950,000

THE NATIONAL POST featured this Niagara-on-the-Lake property for an editorial this past weekend. Providing national exposure and listing information for the home owner. A truly extraordinary element in choosing to list with Sotheby's International Realty Canada. Contact Nancy Brazeau, Sales Representative/Business Manager for details on listing your home with us!

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CIRCA 1849



132 PRIDEAUX STREET

\$1,095,000

This extraordinary 3 bedroom 1.5 storey home (CIRCA 1849) includes wide plank red pine flooring and restored original staircase. The custom made kitchen and great room are accented with vaulted ceilings, a wood burning fireplace, and an original farm house sink - perfect for everyday lounging and informal entertaining.

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RETAIL / OFFICE



1507 NIAGARA STONE ROAD

\$449,000

OVER 3 MILLION VISITORS a year pass by the door. This property has been meticulously maintained and updated by the owner. Large 1 to 2 bedroom apartment upstairs and 2 commercial units on the main level. All are separately metered for gas, electricity and water. There is ample parking for 6-8 cars and it is in the heart of the Virgil retail business area.

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Glenn Brazeau, Nancy Brazeau, Liesa Lepp, Gary Snider, Marlene Ouwendyk, Patricia Atherton, Jan Ronfeld, Anna da Silva, Jaime da Silva, Jason Bornell

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Stone Road Village



This is the finest, 55 plus, life lease property in the Niagara Region. Located at the corner of Niagara Stone Road (Highway 405) and Hunter Road. The site, just outside the Old Town, is well treed with waves over, orchards and vineyards and enjoying wonderful sunsets. It's a short walk to wineries, brewery, restaurant, bank and Shopper's Drug Mart. The building is outstanding, done in brick and stone, all units have glass balconies or patios. There are outdoor rec areas with bar-becues, there is a bus stop for the new NWT Transit service. Inside is a library with wi-fi and a computer, common room for any kind of group or private event, fully equipped exercise room and lots of storage areas. These units are 1100 square feet, include 6 appliances, and are available in 3 layouts and also in reverse plan. Each unit has individual heating and air conditioning controls and in unit storage locker. Once the lease interest has been purchased your monthly cost including taxes, maintenance, utilities including basic cable is \$650.00. Leases start at \$208.000. The seller and operator of the building has a long and well established reputation in the Niagara Region and operates the Grafton Gate project in St. Catharines.



#3-222 Ricardo Street \$795,000

Gracious and Grande Greystone, one of the finest townhouse developments near the waterfront and backing onto historic Fort George property. The private enclave in natural stone and cedar roofs is meticulously maintained. This home features granite kitchen, marble master ensuite bath, dramatic 2 storey great room with marble fireplace, overlooking mistral gully - tall. Main floor den and all contained in a spacious 2800 square foot.



57 Delater Street \$1,295,000

Spectacular views, bubbling fountains and lush landscaping welcomes you to this fine riverside home. The dramatic open concept enjoys views to the Niagara River and historic Fort Niagara beyond. Only 3 blocks from The Prince of Wales Hotel or The Niagara Golf Club make this one of the best locations the Old Town has to offer. The layout of the home offers many unique features.



139 Victoria Street \$1,095,000

A grande old home in the Old Town, updated throughout with 5 bedrooms and 5 1/2 baths. Home to a very successful B & B 'Aberdeen' with fabulous open concept kitchen/family room, formal living and dining rooms. Third floor master suite is a luxurious retreat with great space and wonderful views!



310 Tanbark Road \$895,000

Wonderful sprawling custom built 3 bedroom, 3 ensuite bath bungalow on a fully fenced, treed estate lot. 9 ft ceilings with coffers, fabulous designer crystal chandelier. High end appliances in gourmet kitchen. Featuring an inground pool, expansive perennial gardens, covered patio and stylish pool side pergola.



298 Creek Rd. \$599,000

Perched along the Niagara Escarpment's lower bench, overlooking rolling vineyards, this contemporary residence provides a breathtaking lake view extending from Hamilton to Toronto. Open concept featuring gourmet kitchen opening onto great room and 2 bedroom suites.



20 Frelane 2B \$695,000

Luxurious lakefront living - enjoy spectacular sunsets & the peace and serenity of a constantly changing panorama of natural wonder. This all brick home features 3 bedrooms, master with ensuite and a full on lake view, full basement and two car attached garage.



175 Centre Street \$869,000

Gracious home with expansive rear decks and patio overlooking quiet ravine setting. The layout lends itself well to a B & B and also a great family home. Six bedrooms in all with one being the main floor master with ensuite, 3 bedrooms with ensuites on the second level and 2 more on the lower level with a large rec room. All this located in the heart of the Old Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake providing all the conveniences of shopping, dining and visiting just a short walk away.



140 Carlton Street \$349,000

Enjoy all the benefits of country living in Niagara-on-the-Lake and yet be only a stone's throw from north and St. Catharines. Located near the Watford Canal, this solid brick home has been fully updated and modernized and offers many unique features including a full second floor balcony off the master, a truly family-sized kitchen with adjoining family room with fireplace. Beautifully finished rec room with heated ceiling and floor and lighting, 4th bedroom. Well treed and private fenced rear yard.